

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CANBER 01830 170816Z

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

/056 W

-----170952Z 075781 /20

R 170717Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9997

INFO AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

AMCONSUL MELBOURNE

AMCONSUL SYDNEY

CINCPAC

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE CANBERRA 1830

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: AS, PINT

SUBJ: FORMER TREASURER BILL HAYDEN CHALLENGES WHITLAM FOR
THE ALP'S PARLIAMENTARY LEADERSHIP

1. ON MARCH 11 BILL HAYDEN, THE FORMER TREASURER IN THE WHITLAM GOVERNMENT, ANNOUNCED THAT HE WOULD STAND FOR LEADERSHIP OF THE ALP'S PARLIAMENTARY CAUCUS AGAINST GOUGH WHITLAM WHEN THE ELECTION FOR THE LEADERSHIP BECOMES OPEN AT THE END OF MAY.

2. HAYDEN HAS BEEN PRESSED BY MANY MEMBERS OF THE ALP'S PARLIAMENTARY CAUCUS TO STAND FOR THE LEADERSHIP FOR WEEKS AND FINALLY DECIDED TO DO SO. HE IS A RELATIVELY YOUNG MAN AT 44, AND WAS ONE OF THE FEW MEMBERS OF THE WHITLAM GOVERNMENT WHO DID A COMPETENT JOB IN HANDLING HIS PORTFOLIO. MANY POLITICAL OBSERVERS AND INDEED HAYDEN HIMSELF, HAVE BEEN CONCERNED ABOUT HIS ABILITY TO HANDLE THE PRESSURES OF
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PAGE 02 CANBER 01830 170816Z

LEADING THE ALP'S PARLIAMENTARY WING, BUT HAYDEN HAS APPARENTLY DECIDED THAT HE CAN. HE IS WIDELY REGARDED AS ONE OF THE FEW ALP PARLIAMENTARY MEMBERS WITH THE INTELLIGENCE AND THE PUBLIC ACCEPTABILITY TO SUCCEED WHITLAM AS PARTY LEADER.

2. OVER THE LAST SEVERAL DAYS TRADE UNIONS AND THE ALP'S LEFT WING PARLIAMENTARY WING BACKED WHITLAM AS LEADER AS

DID POWERFUL NSW RIGHT WING BOSS, JOHN DUCKER. AT THE MOMENT, WHITLAM HAS STRONG ALP SUPPORT IN THE VICTORIAN AND NSW BRANCHES OF THE PARTY WHEREAS HAYDEN HAS SUPPORT IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA AND TASMANIA. THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN ORGANIZATION'S POSITION IS UNCLEAR AT THIS TIME, AND THE QUEENSLAND BRANCH APPEARS TO BE BACKING WHITLAM RATHER THAN ITS NATIVE SON HAYDEN.

3. THE PROBLEM FOR WHITLAM IS THAT THE ALP'S PARLIAMENTARY CAUCUS, NOT THE PARTY ORGANIZATION, ELECTS THE ALP'S PARLIAMENTARY LEADER. WHITLAM HAS MANY BITTER ENEMIES WITHIN THE CAUCUS AND A MAJORITY OF THE CAUCUS BELIEVES THAT THE ALP CANNOT WIN WITH WHITLAM AS LEADER. IN ADDITION, HAYDEN IS VIEWD AS AN ACCEPTABLE ALTERNATIVE TO GOUGH. IF THE ELECTION WERE HELD TODAY HAYDEN WOULD WIN.

4. THE VOTE ON THE LEADERSHIP WILL PROBABLY TAKE PLACE IN LATE MAY. THIS GIVES WHITLAM TIME TO TURN ORGANIZATIONAL GRASS ROOTS SUPPORT INTO CAUCUS VOTES. IT ALSO OPENS UP THE POSSIBILITY THAT LIONEL BOWEN, THE SHADOW ATTORNEY GENERAL AND A MEMBER OF THE ALP'S RIGHT WING FROM NSW, MIGHT ALSO ENTER THE LEADERSHIP RACE.

5. THE KEY TO THE EVENTUAL OUTCOME OF THE STRUGGLE WILL BE THE ACTIONS OF THE RIGHT WING NSW ALP MACHINE LED BY JOHN DUCKER. IF DUCKER AND HIS PARLIAMENTARY PROTEGE, PAUL KEATING THE SHADOW MINISTER FOR MINERALS AND ENERGY, SEE THAT WHITLAM DOESN'T HAVE THE VOTES TO SURVIVE; THEY WILL PROBABLY SUPPORT HAYDEN IN RETURN FOR HAYDEN'S AGREE-
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PAGE 03 CANBER 01830 170816Z

MENT TO SUPPORT KEATING FOR THE DEPUTY LEADERSHIP AGAINST TOM UREN, A NSW LEFT WINGER THEY DETEST. WHILE WHITLAM HAS BEEN COUNTED OUT MANY TIMES BEFORE IT BEGINS TO LOOK AS IF HE MAY HAVE REACHED THE END OF THE ROAD. AN ALP LED BY HAYDEN AND KEATING APPEARS TO BE THE PROBABLY OUTCOME, BUT EVERYTHING STILL SEEMS UP FOR GRABS.PERCIVAL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PARTY LEADERS, ELECTIONS
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
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Format: TEL
From: CANBERRA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770351/aaaabrss.tel
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Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
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